United Nations A/64/128

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 July 2009

Original: English

Sixty-fourth session
Item 70 of the preliminary list*
Promotion and protection of human rights:
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/192, provides an overview of the status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It contains information concerning the status of signatures and ratifications of the Convention and the Optional Protocol, the first session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in February 2009 and the ongoing efforts by Governments towards ratification and implementation of the Convention. The report also presents an overview of the progress made by the United Nations system towards implementation of the Convention and describes relevant activities by non-governmental organizations.

* A/64/50.

09-39377 (E) 310709

Please recycle

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
	Introduction	1	3
I.	Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto	2–5	3
II.	Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	6–7	3
III.	Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	8–9	4
IV.	Activities undertaken in support of the Convention	10–66	4
	A. Governments	10–20	4
	B. United Nations system	21–60	8
	C. Non-governmental organizations	61–66	15
Annex			
	List of signatures, ratifications or accessions to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto as of 6 July 2009		17

Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/192, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol and the implementation of the resolution.

I. Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto

2. Since the previous report on the status of the Convention and the Optional Protocol,[1] through July 2009, there have been 22 ratifications and 6 accessions, as well as 11 signatures to the Convention. There have also been 14 signatures, 13 ratifications and 7 accessions to the Optional Protocol.

3. As of the date of the submission of this report, there were a total of 62 States parties and 142 signatories to the Convention. For the Optional Protocol, there were 85 signatories and 42 States parties. The list of signatures and ratifications or accessions is contained in annex I to the present report.[2]

4. Among the 62 States parties to the Convention, 16 are from the African Group, 17 from the Asian Group, 3 from the Eastern European Group, 17 from the Latin American and Caribbean Group and 9 from the Western European and Others Group.

5. The secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, housed in the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, serves as the secretariat for the Conference of States Parties to the Convention with the support of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), while OHCHR serves as the secretariat for the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with the support of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

II. Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

6. In accordance with article 40 of the Convention, the first session of the Conference of States Parties was convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 31 October and 3 November 2008. The Conference elected members of its bureau and adopted its rules of procedure. In accordance with article 34 of the Convention, the Conference elected the 12 members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 3 November. The session also included an interactive panel discussion entitled "The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a human rights instrument and a tool for achieving the Millennium Development Goals".

7. At the time of the submission of the present report, preparation was under way for the second session of the Conference of States Parties to be held from 2 to

[1] A/63/264 and Corr.1.

[2] Information on the status of the Convention and the Optional Protocol is available at http://www.un.org/disabilities.

4 September 2009 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The theme of the session is "Legislative measures to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities". The programme includes a high-level panel, a round-table discussion on legislative measures to implement the Convention and an interactive dialogue on the work of the United Nations system in support of the implementation of the Convention. There will also be an informal non-governmental organizations segment in conjunction with the Conference.

III. Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

8. In accordance with article 34 of the Convention, the first session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was held from 23 to 27 February 2009. The 12 members, elected at the first session of the Conference of States Parties, were inducted into the Committee. The Committee elected its chairperson and the officers of the bureau and initiated discussion on its rules of procedure and methods of work. During the session, newly elected members of the Committee engaged in dialogue with States parties, United Nations entities, representatives of civil society and national human rights institutions.

9. At its first session the Committee adopted a declaration, entitled "Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: looking forward". The Committee also adopted several decisions, including one by which it requested its secretariat to take measures to ensure that all persons with disabilities had access to meetings of human rights mechanisms, particularly for the Committee's future sessions. In addition, the Committee called for the provision of signage in Braille, forms that are easy to read and understand, sign language interpreters and other appropriate forms of assistance and support, and relevant information and communications technologies.

IV. Activities undertaken in support of the Convention

A. Governments

10. This section provides a summary of the thirty-five submissions received from Governments in response to the note verbale of 22 April 2009 in which the Secretariat requested information on progress concerning the Convention and the Optional Protocol. Submissions were received from the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Thailand, Togo, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United Arab Emirates.

1. Progress towards ratification of the Convention

11. Several States that had signed the Convention reported having taken steps towards ratification, including Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Malta, Portugal and the United Republic of Tanzania.

12. The following Governments reported on progress made in their legislative frameworks towards ratification of the Convention: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the United Arab Emirates.

13. An international conference to promote strategies for ratification and implementation of the Convention will be organized in Dubai in November 2009 by the United Arab Emirates in cooperation with Rehabilitation International.

14. Brazil and Kenya ratified the Convention and are taking administrative and other measures towards its implementation.

2. Harmonization of domestic legislation and practice in compliance with the Convention

15. Several States parties reported progress in harmonization of domestic legislation in compliance with the Convention:

(a) Australia introduced to its Parliament in December 2008 the Disability Discrimination and Other Human Rights Legislation Amendment Bill 2008 in order to implement recommendations on the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and to ensure their full and equal participation in community life;

(b) China drafted a series of laws and regulations, including the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons, in order to bring domestic legislation in line with the Convention, including by promoting accessible design standards and environments;

(c) Ecuador included in its Constitution an independent chapter on persons with disabilities;

(d) Egypt amended laws and ministerial decisions in line with the Convention with regard to equal rights, non-discrimination and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, children with disabilities, community-based rehabilitation, education and training, employment, transportation and access to buildings and outdoor spaces;

(e) Hungary is taking legislative measures concerning Hungarian Sign Language, assistive animals and national implementation and monitoring mechanisms;

(f) Jamaica established an inter-ministerial committee to review existing legislation and policies on persons with disabilities ranging from employment, education and health to social assistance. Other legislative changes include revisions to national building codes and standards and amendments to laws in order to permit persons with hearing impairment to drive;

(g) Mexico is currently reviewing proposals for harmonizing domestic legislation in line with the Convention;

(h) New Zealand undertook a comprehensive review of its domestic laws, policies and practices in order to fulfil its obligations under the Convention;

(i) The Republic of Korea reported that the acts on disability discrimination and the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and on special education for persons with disabilities came into force. In addition it adopted the Welfare of

Disabled Persons Act and the Enforcement Decree of the Act on Convenience Promotion for Persons with Disabilities, the Elderly and Pregnant Women;

(j) In Slovenia, efforts to implement the Convention have been reflected in amendments made to national acts to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the built environment, transport, information and communications;

(k) Thailand adopted laws and policies related to the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, in compliance with the Convention.

3. National implementation and monitoring

16. Several States parties reported on progress in developing and/or strengthening national frameworks for promotion, protection and monitoring of the Convention:

(a) Australia is developing, through a multi-stakeholder consultative process, its national disability strategy to serve as a mechanism to incorporate the principles of the Convention into its policies and programmes;

(b) China is developing a monitoring system on the situation of persons with disabilities, following the second sample survey of persons with disabilities conducted in 2006, in order to build a scientific basis for the development of policies and programmes;

(c) Colombia established a framework on planning disability policies for the period 2007-2010 as its strategy to implement public policies for improvement of the living conditions of persons with disabilitie.

(d) Mexico adopted its national programme for the development of persons with disabilities 2009-2012, which includes strategies for attitudinal changes for an inclusive society and improved accessibility;

(e) Montenegro adopted its strategy for integration of persons with disabilities, 2008-2016, developed in collaboration with national associations of persons with disabilities and regional development organizations;

(f) New Zealand conducted the first review of the New Zealand disability strategy, which is implemented by the Office for Disability Issues under the Minister for Disabilities Issues, and will finalize its national monitoring framework by the end of 2009;

(g) Peru recently established a permanent inter-agency commission for the Convention and its implementation;

(h) In Slovenia, the Government established the Council for Persons with Disabilities, a monitoring mechanism for the Convention, with the participation of experts and organizations of persons with disabilities;

(i) In Thailand, the Office for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities initiated its four-year strategy to promote the human rights of persons with disabilities and implement the Convention throughout the country;

(j) In Togo, the Directorate for Persons with Disabilities developed national strategies for the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and the implementation of its new legislation.

4. Other policy measures for implementation of the Convention

17. Several Governments also reported on policy measures currently undertaken to implement the Convention in the areas of accessibility, community-based rehabilitation, sectoral issues and other new policy initiatives. The following countries reported on progress in the area of accessibility:

(a) Argentina widely disseminated the text of the Convention and relevant materials through the Internet and other media;

(b) Australia drafted accessibility standards, which have been tabled in its Parliament;

(c) China increased access to legal aid for persons with disabilities and is in the process of establishing, by the end of 2010, 100 barrier-free model cities throughout the country;

(d) In the Czech Republic, a decree came into force to ensure the accessibility of public administration websites;

(e) Greece conducted a review of the implementation of accessibility standards applicable to public sector institutions and initiated a two-year accessibility programme with a view to full compliance at the municipal level;

(f) Mexico developed mandatory architectural standards for accessibility to the premises of federal and public administration offices, including those of the national health system;

(g) Portugal disseminated the text of the Convention in accessible formats and provided public administration employees with training for the implementation of the Convention;

(h) Slovenia undertook measures to promote awareness-raising of the Convention, accessibility, ensuring voting rights and the identification of independent living alternatives to the institutional care of persons with disabilities;

(i) Ukraine established regulatory standards and a monitoring mechanism to ensure access to the physical environment and to communication technologies.

18. Regarding community-based rehabilitation:

(a) China undertook measures to strengthen rehabilitation services, including community-based rehabilitation and home-care services;

(b) Egypt adopted community-based rehabilitation as a broad strategic approach to the integration of persons with disabilities into society;

(c) Thailand hosted the first Asia-Pacific Community-based Rehabilitation Congress with the theme "Community-based inclusive development: Persons with disabilities and their families", which defined the role of community-based rehabilitation as a mechanism for implementation of the Convention;

(d) Ukraine established a rehabilitation programme that would be free of charge or available under favourable conditions for persons with disabilities.

19. With respect to sectoral issues:

(a) Jamaica reviewed its newly drafted national policy on special education prior to implementation of the Convention;

(b) Malta undertook measures in education, employment and social services and conducted research on disability based on census information;

(c) Montenegro adopted regulations establishing national frameworks for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities;

(d) The Russian Federation enhanced social protection measures for persons with disabilities and adopted measures to promote their employment, thereby decreasing dependence on unemployment benefits.

20. Other policy initiatives include:

(a) Bolivia adopted new legislation which created a national solidarity and equity fund to provide support for persons with disabilities from the general treasury;

(b) Ecuador's "Procuraduria de Discapacides" adopted strategies with public and private entities to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and provide technical assistance to provincial commissions;

(c) The United Arab Emirates issued a periodic publication, *My World*, to sensitize the general public concerning the rights of persons with disabilities, and a guide to legislation and appropriate environmental planning for persons with disabilities in public buildings, institutions and facilities.

B. United Nation system

21. The United Nations system has been working at all levels to promote the implementation of the Convention. At its twelfth session, in September 2006, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) established the Inter-Agency Support Group on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Group coordinates the work of the United Nations system in support of the promotion and implementation of the Convention.[3]

22. The third meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group took place from 30 to 31 March 2009 in New York at the headquarters of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, OHCHR and UNFPA co-chaired the meeting. One of the main initiatives was work on a draft strategy and plan of action to mainstream the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities throughout the work of the United Nations system.

[3] The membership of the Inter-Agency Support Group consists of: Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Tourism Organization (WTO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Secretariat, specifically Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Management, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Department of Public Information, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations regional commissions: Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

23. In addition, in June 2009, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) organized the Regional Inter-agency Meeting on the Promotion and Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific.

24. The United Nations system also continues work to implement the Convention through its recent activities related to accessibility in the areas of human resources, information and physical facilities, as well as in awareness-raising, capacity-building and technical cooperation.

1. Accessibility: human resources, information and physical facilities

(a) Human resources

25. Offices of the United Nations system continue to make necessary changes to ensure that the human resources policies of the United Nations are non-discriminatory and more inclusive to persons with disabilities. At its seventeenth session, in March 2009, the CEB Human Resources Network requested a policy statement on disabilities in the workplace. The draft statement will be submitted for approval to the Human Resources Network and presented for endorsement to the High-level Committee on Management and then to CEB. The Network noted that the policy statement represents a large shift in thinking, as it moves from recognizing people's disabilities to recognizing people with disabilities for their skills and abilities.

26. The United Nations Staff Rules, updated effective 1 July 2009, as well as corresponding administrative instructions, reflect the efforts of the United Nations to use more disability-sensitive terminology.

27. The United Nations Secretariat is currently adding new technology features to its online recruitment process in order to make the electronic vacancy announcements and electronic submission of job applications accessible. The new features support the use of assistive technologies, such as screen readers and other measures to make the online recruitment system available to blind and visually impaired users.

28. UNDP launched a blog-based discussion on inclusion and disability in June to August 2008 to discuss conceptual and programming issues as well as human resources management. UNDP is also developing an online learning tool to sensitize staff members to the needs and rights of persons with disabilities. The objective of the tool is to raise awareness of the importance of including, empowering and employing persons with disabilities. In addition, UNDP is currently developing guidelines for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in developing and implementing programmes related to disability.

29. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is building on its policy on the employment of persons with disabilities that was adopted in 2005 and is posting its job openings through disability networks and encouraging persons with disabilities to apply. The ILO Governing Body has also approved a reasonable accommodation fund for the purpose of providing needed devices for employees and interns with disabilities so that these costs are not a disincentive for any specific programme or office budget.

(b) Information

30. Entities of the United Nations system have also been improving the accessibility of their respective websites in different languages. To assist content-providing offices throughout the United Nations system, the Department of Public Information has developed a website dedicated to improving the accessibility of United Nations websites.[4] The site features validation procedures for content providers, designers and developers to enable them to assess the accessibility of a website and provides templates to support the creation of accessible sites.

31. The Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict),[5] an advocacy initiative of the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT and Development, works to promote information and communications technology solutions for persons with disabilities and related best policy practices among Governments in the context of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The initiative also includes multi-stakeholder global and regional forums, the dissemination of information and research tools, media relations and a web-based media resource centre. G3ict developed, in cooperation with Disabled Peoples' International, the Digital Accessibility and Inclusion Index, which measures the degree to which countries meet the requirements of accessibility to ICT in line with the Convention. G3ict also publishes the *G3ict Digital Accessibility World Report*, which provides updates and information on developments in accessibility.

(c) Physical facilities

32. Entities of the United Nations system seek to adhere to the accessibility standards and regulations of their respective host countries. At regional and country levels, some offices have conducted accessibility audits of their facilities. In the current renovations of its Headquarters, the United Nations conforms to the United States federal standards and regulations relating to accessibility as well as to the building codes of New York City. The responsibility for ensuring accessibility at Headquarters lies with the Department of Management, whose capital master plan team is working to create a fully accessible facility. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been working closely with the Department of Management and the Office of the Capital Master Plan to ensure that all indoor and outdoor areas will be accessible, including the temporary North Lawn Conference Building that will be used for the functions of the existing conference building from late 2009 through 2011. Virtually all the areas that delegations, guests and office staff occupy will be fully accessible and all aspects of the renovation will be in compliance with the standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the building code of the host city. The Office of the Capital Master Plan and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs have also organized consultations with experts in universal design to ensure that the United Nations premises will be accessible.

33. The United Nations is taking measures to accommodate other potential needs of persons with disabilities attending its meetings at Headquarters. Currently, t-coil loops, used as mechanical acoustical amplifiers by persons with impaired hearing, are available for meetings, and plans are under way to install assistive listening devices, large print materials in Braille and audio recordings for persons with disabilities.

---

[4] http://www.un.org/webaccessibility/.

[5] http://www.g3ict.com/.

2. Awareness-raising

34. For the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2008, under the theme "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: dignity and justice for all of us", the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized a number of events in collaboration with other offices at United Nations Headquarters.[6] The United Nations Institute for Training and Research, G3ict and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs organized the Seminar on implementing the Digital Accessibility Agenda of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: challenges and opportunities for signatory States.

35. In May 2009, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs participated in a strategy session on the role of parliamentarians in addressing the rights of persons with disabilities, organized by Parliamentarians for Global Action. Other participants included parliamentarians from Nigeria, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Sweden, who discussed issues related to the implementation of the Convention through domestic legislation and national strategies.

36. OHCHR prepared a thematic study focusing on key legal measures for the ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was submitted to the Human Rights Council at its tenth session in March 2009.[7] The celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights contributed to awareness-raising concerning the urgent need to address the human rights of persons with disabilities.

37. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Public Information, in close collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities, have initiated discussions to develop an online disability awareness and sensitivity training module for the United Nations Cyberschoolbus, an online global teaching and learning project for teachers and students. The module will also help to build the self-esteem of children with disabilities. The two departments are also collaborating in the production of a United Nations Television (UNTV) story on the impact of the Convention and efforts of persons with disabilities for their 21st Century and UN in Action series.

38. On 8 May 2009, the United Nations Information Centre in Vienna organized events in collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities to mark the first anniversary of the coming into force of the Convention. The event included discussions with a group of persons with brain injuries, their families and caregivers, as well as United Nations staff and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

39. The International Conference on Education organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Geneva in November 2008 was dedicated to inclusive education. Over 1,500 participants from 153 Member States, including 150 ministers of education, 20 intergovernmental organizations and 25 non-governmental and other organizations participated in the Convention in order to promote inclusive education and encourage the implementation of the Convention. UNESCO also produced a DVD entitled *A world for inclusion: Ensuring education for all through the UN disability convention*,

[6] See http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=109.

[7] A/HRC/10/48.

which used footage from Finland, Kenya and Turkey to address the situation of children with disabilities worldwide.

40. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported awareness-raising on the Convention in several countries and produced a child-friendly version of the Convention *It's about ability: an explanation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, which is used in several countries such as Uzbekistan, Burkina Faso and the Russian Federation.

41. ILO developed a video documentary entitled *From rights to reality* about trade unions around the world that promote decent work for persons with disabilities. The ILO Turin Centre has developed a training programme on labour markets and disability and has recently field-tested and conducted disability equality training programmes, as well as an online training course on disability and law.

42. To raise awareness of the Convention, UNFPA published two advocacy resources, *Sexual and Reproductive Health of Persons with Disabilities* and *UNFPA Emerging Issues: Mental, Sexual and Reproductive Health*. In Haiti, UNFPA-supported efforts to advance the rights of persons with disabilities in the country included organizing a national forum as a first stage in the formulation of a national policy for the integration of persons with disabilities. It also translated the Convention into Creole.

3. Capacity-building

43. The United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability, administered by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, provides support to catalytic and innovative activities for the implementation of the Convention, with special emphasis on less developed countries and activities that have global relevance. Recently, funds were used to support projects to raise awareness and strengthen the skills of organizations of persons with disabilities in order to promote better understanding and the implementation of the Convention in several Western African countries, such as Burkina Faso, the Niger, Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, as well as in Ethiopia and Somalia. In Ethiopia, the Fund provided assistance to promote the inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families by using the Convention as an instrument for building inclusive policies and practices. In Somalia, funds were provided to increase awareness-raising concerning the rights of persons with disabilities through media campaigns and training workshops for all stakeholders. In the West Bank, the Fund assisted in the development of leadership and mentoring training programmes for women with disabilities. In Sri Lanka, funds were provided to develop a national network of organizations and people working to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

44. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNFPA, in collaboration with the Wellesley Centers for Women, published *Disability Rights, Gender, and Development: A Resource Tool for Action*. The publication is based on a training programme developed for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) co-organized an expert group meeting on violence against women in May 2008, which included disability as an important factor that shaped a woman's experience of violence. The meeting provided recommendations for measures to protect all women from violence, including women with disabilities.

45. ESCAP along with the regional office of OHCHR organized an expert group meeting on Harmonization of national legislations with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok in June 2009.

46. Following the inclusion of a reference to persons with disabilities in the UNDP strategic plan 2008-2011, a number of country offices have strengthened their support in this field, through both targeted projects and mainstreaming. Over 50 UNDP offices are implementing, or have recently completed, over 100 programmes and projects primarily related to the empowerment of persons with disabilities and capacity-building. In Croatia, UNDP has been supporting both the Government and organizations of persons with disabilities through the project on the right to live in the community: social inclusion and persons with disabilities. The project includes the development of specialized foster care for children with intellectual disabilities, promotes inclusive education and employment opportunities and carries out awareness-raising activities through public events.

47. The UNFPA strategic plan 2008-2011 provides guidance to UNFPA staff to ensure that persons with disabilities participate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of culturally and gender-sensitive policies and programmes. In the Asia-Pacific region, UNFPA supports initiatives for women with temporary or permanent disabilities resulting from gender-based violence, as well as obstetric fistula, uterine prolapse and pregnancy-related disabilities.

48. UNICEF contributed to the advancement of the rights of persons with disabilities through a collaborative partnership with Special Olympics International in eight countries. International Inspiration is a multi-country sport initiative in which the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF is a leading partner. The programme will be implemented by 20 UNICEF country offices and will provide quality and inclusive physical education and sports opportunities to children with disabilities.

49. The United Nations Mine Action Service emphasizes the relevance of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the work of peacekeeping operations and continues to consult actively with field staff in order to inform and guide United Nations country programming. The Convention provides a legal framework that helps States fulfil victim assistance obligations pursuant to article 6 of the Anti-Personnel Mine-Ban Treaty and article 8 of Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The United Nations Mine Action Service has worked to integrate the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities into mine action programmes and national frameworks for the implementation of victim assistance programmes.

50. ILO has undertaken a wide range of activities in knowledge development, advocacy, technical cooperation and capacity-building, including several subregional meetings on decent work for persons with disabilities, as well as a subregional meeting on disability legislation in South Africa.

51. The mandate of UN-Habitat includes significant references to persons with disabilities. The publication *Policy Guidelines for Children with Disabilities Living in Informal Settlements in Kenya* details a comprehensive community centre approach to rehabilitation that ensures accessible and adequate space for health services, education and social activities. UN-Habitat is testing this approach in a

pilot project in Kibera, Africa's second largest informal settlement, located in Nairobi.

52. UNHCR has instructed country offices to mainstream the Convention in all aspects of their work. Initiatives have been carried out to increase the knowledge and skills of UNHCR staff in working with a diverse population of persons with disabilities. The Convention complements the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and provides an important legal framework and standard-setting tool for the protection of refugees and other persons of concern with disabilities.

53. UNHCR has also taken steps to enhance the protection of persons with disabilities by adding specific protection provisions for them in the planning process. Refugee and internally displaced children with disabilities in both urban and camp settings are of particular concern, as they face challenges in obtaining access to education due to physical, attitudinal or social barriers. UNHCR and its partners are also developing a training module for field staff on psycho-social support for persons of concern, using the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines on mental health and psycho-social support, with a specific focus on persons of concern who have suffered torture, violence and/or harassment.

54. The World Health Organization (WHO) is facilitating the development of technical guidelines on community-based rehabilitation to provide clear directions on how community-based development initiatives can work to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and respect for their inherent dignity in accordance with the Convention. Furthermore, WHO, in collaboration with the Law College of the Indian Law Society (ILS) in Pune, India, has established the International Diploma on Mental Health Law and Human Rights, a course of study that aims to build the capacity of key actors in countries to enable them to participate in advocacy, legal and policy reform.

55. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights has included the issue of copyright exceptions and limitations for persons with disabilities on its work agenda. WIPO has taken measures to raise awareness and increase accessibility along with other partners to strengthen synergies between the role of the intellectual property system and the Convention.

4. Technical cooperation

56. UNFPA provides technical support for the incorporation of the disability perspective into health policies, programmes and national development frameworks, while advocating for the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes in its project countries worldwide. For example in Cuba, UNFPA provided support to the Ministry of Education in developing a curriculum on reproductive health for schools for children with mental and physical disabilities. In Paraguay, UNFPA supported an anti-discrimination network which spearheaded the development of the draft legislation against all forms of discrimination.

57. ILO facilitates the inclusion of a disability component in its technical cooperation projects relating to entrepreneurship development in East Asia and East and Southern Africa, in skills development in Asia, and in the activities of the ILO

Crisis Response and Reconstruction Programme,[8] including projects that involve linkage to the Inter-agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. The project on promoting the employability and employment of people with disabilities through effective legislation furthers the review and reform of disability-related training on employment laws and policies and their effective implementation in selected countries of East and Southern Africa, Asia and the Pacific. ILO has also conducted a technical cooperation project on promoting decent work for people with disabilities through a disability inclusion support service that aims to assist countries[9] in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities as outlined in the Convention.

58. UNESCO promotes technical assistance for inclusive education in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education. Particular emphasis is placed on advocating measures for the elimination of discrimination so as to realize equal opportunities for all in basic education. Measures aimed at fulfilling obligations under the UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocational Education complement the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

59. UNICEF provides technical assistance in the review of national legislation in light of the provisions of the Convention. UNICEF assisted China in the revision of the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons and secured the inclusion of new provisions on children with disabilities. It has also worked with several countries to integrate disability into social protection system reforms. In Croatia, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova and South Africa, UNICEF is promoting efforts to make income support schemes inclusive of adults and children with disabilities and their families.

60. The World Bank provides technical assistance through projects that have disability-related components and activities covering a range of sectors, including health, education, social protection, transport and urban development. In addition, it has introduced specific articles of the Convention into training events conducted by its Disability and Development Team, hosted events specific to the Convention and is developing a primer on the Convention for its project leaders. Pending proposals for World Bank funding have included references to the implementation of the Convention and, within these proposals, priority is given to support projects in countries that have signed/ratified the Convention. Some countries have also expressed their interest in receiving World Bank loans to meet their obligations under the Convention and formal requests are anticipated.

C. Non-governmental organizations

61. The role of non-governmental organizations, especially those of persons with disabilities, is crucial for the successful implementation of the Convention. The following section provides a brief summary of the efforts to promote implementation by five major non-governmental organizations.

---

[8] http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/crisis/.

[9] The countries that have received technical cooperation under the programme, as of May 2009, are Ethiopia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, with outreach to Kenya and Uganda, and Viet Nam, with outreach to Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

62. **Disabled Peoples' International** is a network of national organizations or assemblies of persons with disabilities. It promotes the ratification and implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocol through its five regional development offices and national assemblies (member organizations) in 134 countries. Disabled Peoples' International published (a) a self-tutorial toolkit on Convention ratification and implementation; (b) a series of 44 two-page primers on different articles and related topics of the Convention; and (c) a guide to organizing workshops on the Convention. It also facilitated national forums on the Convention in the Philippines and India and convened workshops on both the Convention and the Millennium Development Goals in Guinea and Kenya.

63. **Inclusion International** is a global federation of family-based organizations advocating for the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities worldwide, representing over 200 member federations in 115 countries. Inclusion International disseminated a booklet entitled *The Road Ahead* to raise awareness about how the Convention can address issues affecting the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families.

64. **International Disability Alliance** is an informal network comprised of eight international and two regional organizations. In support of the ratification and implementation of the Convention, the Alliance organized two regional seminars in 2009 on the Convention in the Philippines and Egypt and organized a large number of national seminars, particularly in Latin America. The Alliance also produced several manuals and guidance documents on the Convention for its members.

65. **International Disability and Development Consortium**, a global consortium of 23 organizations of persons with disabilities and development non-governmental organizations, supports and promotes initiatives in mainstreaming disability in development worldwide. Its member organizations have recently developed training manuals and toolkits on the Convention in India and Kenya. The Consortium organized an international workshop on the role of community-based rehabilitation at the first Asia Pacific Community-based Rehabilitation Congress in Bangkok in February 2009. It has published training manuals on human rights and persons with disabilities based on the Convention in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Mongolian. The Consortium also supports a project called "Young voices" that trains young persons with disabilities from around the world in advocacy and media skills.

66. **Rehabilitation International** is a global network of experts, professionals and advocates working together to empower persons with disabilities and to provide sustainable solutions for a more inclusive and accessible society. It is conducting a global advocacy campaign to raise awareness concerning the Convention and promote its ratification and implementation. Rehabilitation International created and widely distributed media outreach, advocacy and educational materials in accessible formats for use by disabled persons organizations, non-governmental organizations and Governments, especially in developing countries; issued fact sheets and press releases on the Convention; and published the first two issues of the *International Rehabilitation Review*. Rehabilitation International also implemented, in partnership with a local rehabilitation centre, the first phase of a project to promote inclusion of women with disabilities in rural states in eastern India.

Annex

List of signatures, ratifications or accessions to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto as of 6 July 2009

A. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Participant	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*	*Participant*	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*
Algeria	30 Mar 2007		Chile	30 Mar 2007	29 Jul 2008
Andorra	27 Apr 2007		China	30 Mar 2007	1 Aug 2008
Antigua and Barbuda	30 Mar 2007		Colombia	30 Mar 2007	
Argentina	30 Mar 2007	2 Sep 2008	Comoros	26 Sep 2007	
Armenia	30 Mar 2007		Congo	30 Mar 2007	
Australia	30 Mar 2007	7 Jul 2008	Cook Islands		8 May 2009[a]
Austria	30 Mar 2007	26 Sep 2008	Costa Rica	30 Mar 2007	1 Oct 2008
Azerbaijan	9 Jan 2008	28 Jan 2009	Côte d'Ivoire	7 Jun 2007	
Bahrain	25 Jun 2007		Croatia	30 Mar 2007	15 Aug 2007
Bangladesh	9 May 2007	30 Nov 2007	Cuba	26 Apr 2007	6 Sep 2007
Barbados	19 Jul 2007		Cyprus	30 Mar 2007	
Belgium	30 Mar 2007	2 Jul 2009	Czech Republic	30 Mar 2007	
Benin	8 Feb 2008		Denmark	30 Mar 2007	
Bolivia	13 Aug 2007		Dominica	30 Mar 2007	
Brazil	30 Mar 2007	1 Aug 2008	Dominican Republic	30 Mar 2007	
Brunei Darussalam	18 Dec 2007		Ecuador	30 Mar 2007	3 Apr 2008
Bulgaria	27 Sep 2007		Egypt	4 Apr 2007	14 Apr 2008
Burkina Faso	23 May 2007	23 Jul 2009	El Salvador	30 Mar 2007	14 Dec 2007
Burundi	26 Apr 2007		Estonia	25 Sep 2007	
Cambodia	1 Oct 2007		Ethiopia	30 Mar 2007	
Cameroon	1 Oct 2008		European Community	30 Mar 2007	
Canada	30 Mar 2007		Finland	30 Mar 2007	
Cape Verde	30 Mar 2007		France	30 Mar 2007	
Central African Republic	9 May 2007		Gabon	30 Mar 2007	1 Oct 2007

Participant	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*	*Participant*	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*
Georgia	10 Jul 2009		Luxembourg	30 Mar 2007	
Germany	30 Mar 2007	24 Feb 2009	Madagascar	25 Sep 2007	
Ghana	30 Mar 2007		Malawi	27 Sep 2007	
Greece	30 Mar 2007		Malaysia	8 Apr 2008	
Guatemala	30 Mar 2007	7 Apr 2009	Maldives	2 Oct 2007	
Guinea	16 May 2007	8 Feb 2008	Mali	15 May 2007	7 Apr 2008
Guyana	11 Apr 2007		Malta	30 Mar 2007	
Haiti		23 Jul 2009[a]	Mauritius	25 Sep 2007	
Honduras	30 Mar 2007	14 Apr 2008	Mexico	30 Mar 2007	17 Dec 2007
Hungary	30 Mar 2007	20 Jul 2007	Mongolia		13 May 2009[a]
Iceland	30 Mar 2007		Montenegro	27 Sep 2007	
India	30 Mar 2007	1 Oct 2007	Morocco	30 Mar 2007	8 Apr 2009
Indonesia	30 Mar 2007		Mozambique	30 Mar 2007	
Ireland	30 Mar 2007		Namibia	25 Apr 2007	4 Dec 2007
Israel	30 Mar 2007		Nepal	3 Jan 2008	
Italy	30 Mar 2007	15 May 2009	Netherlands	30 Mar 2007	
Jamaica	30 Mar 2007	30 Mar 2007	New Zealand	30 Mar 2007	25 Sep 2008
Japan	28 Sep 2007		Nicaragua	30 Mar 2007	7 Dec 2007
Jordan	30 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008	Niger	30 Mar 2007	24 Jun 2008
Kazakhstan	11 Dec 2008		Nigeria	30 Mar 2007	
Kenya	30 Mar 2007	19 May 2008	Norway	30 Mar 2007	
Lao People's Democratic Republic	15 Jan 2008		Oman	17 Mar 2008	6 Jan 2009
Latvia	18 Jul 2008		Pakistan	25 Sep 2008	
Lebanon	14 Jun 2007		Panama	30 Mar 2007	7 Aug 2007
Lesotho		2 Dec 2008[a]	Paraguay	30 Mar 2007	3 Sep 2008
Liberia	30 Mar 2007		Peru	30 Mar 2007	30 Jan 2008
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	1 May 2008		Philippines	25 Sep 2007	15 Apr 2008
Lithuania	30 Mar 2007		Poland	30 Mar 2007	

Participant	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*	*Participant*	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*
Portugal	30 Mar 2007		Sweden	30 Mar 2007	15 Dec 2008
Qatar	9 Jul 2007	13 May 2008	Syrian Arab Republic	30 Mar 2007	10 Jul 2009
Republic of Korea	30 Mar 2007	11 Dec 2008	Thailand	30 Mar 2007	29 Jul 2008
Republic of Moldova	30 Mar 2007		The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	30 Mar 2007	
Romania	26 Sep 2007		Togo	23 Sep 2008	
Russian Federation	24 Sept 2008		Tonga	15 Nov 2007	
Rwanda		15 Dec 2008[a]	Trinidad and Tobago	27 Sep 2007	
San Marino	30 Mar 2007	22 Feb 2008	Tunisia	30 Mar 2007	2 Apr 2008
Saudi Arabia		24 Jun 2008[a]	Turkey	30 Mar 2007	
Senegal	25 Apr 2007		Turkmenistan		4 Sep 2008[a]
Serbia	17 Dec 2007		Uganda	30 Mar 2007	25 Sep 2008
Seychelles	30 Mar 2007		Ukraine	24 Sep 2008	
Sierra Leone	30 Mar 2007		United Arab Emirates	8 Feb 2008	
Slovakia	26 Sep 2007		United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	30 Mar 2007	8 Jun 2009
Slovenia	30 Mar 2007	24 Apr 2008	United Republic of Tanzania	30 Mar 2007	
Solomon Islands	23 Sep 2008		United States of America	30 Jul 2009	
South Africa	30 Mar 2007	30 Nov 2007	Uruguay	3 Apr 2007	11 Feb 2009
Spain	30 Mar 2007	3 Dec 2007	Uzbekistan	27 Feb 2009	
Sri Lanka	30 Mar 2007		Vanuatu	17 May 2007	23 Oct 2008
Sudan	30 Mar 2007	24 Apr 2009	Viet Nam	22 Oct 2007	
Suriname	30 Mar 2007		Yemen	30 Mar 2007	26 Mar 2009
Swaziland	25 Sep 2007		Zambia	9 May 2008	

[a] Accession.

B. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Participant	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*	*Participant*	*Signature*	*Ratification or accession*
Algeria	30 Mar 2007		Dominican Republic	30 Mar 2007	
Andorra	27 Apr 2007		Ecuador	30 Mar 2007	3 Apr 2008
Antigua and Barbuda	30 Mar 2007		El Salvador	30 Mar 2007	14 Dec 2007
Argentina	30 Mar 2007	2 Sep 2008	Finland	30 Mar 2007	
Armenia	30 Mar 2007		France	23 Sep 2008	
Austria	30 Mar 2007	26 Sep 2008	Gabon	25 Sep 2007	
Azerbaijan	9 Jan 2008	28 Jan 2009	Georgia	10 Jul 2009	
Bangladesh		12 May 2008[a]	Germany	30 Mar 2007	24 Feb 2009
Belgium	30 Mar 2007	2 Jul 2009	Ghana	30 Mar 2007	
Benin	8 Feb 2008		Guatemala	30 Mar 2007	7 Apr 2009
Bolivia	13 Aug 2007		Guinea	31 Aug 2007	8 Feb 2008
Bosnia and Herzegovina	29 Jul 2009		Haiti		23 Jul 2009[a]
Brazil	30 Mar 2007	1 Aug 2008	Honduras	23 Aug 2007	
Bulgaria	18 Dec 2008		Hungary	30 Mar 2007	20 Jul 2007
Burkina Faso	23 May 2007	23 Jul 2008	Iceland	30 Mar 2007	
Burundi	26 Apr 2007		Italy	30 Mar 2007	15 May 2009
Cambodia	1 Oct 2007		Jamaica	30 Mar 2007	
Cameroon	1 Oct 2008		Jordan	30 Mar 2007	
Central African Republic	9 May 2007		Kazakhstan	11 Dec 2008	
Chile	30 Mar 2007	29 Jul 2008	Lebanon	14 Jun 2007	
Congo	30 Mar 2007		Liberia	30 Mar 2007	
Cook Islands		8 May 2009[a]	Lithuania	30 Mar 2007	
Costa Rica	30 Mar 2007	1 Oct 2008	Luxembourg	30 Mar 2007	
Côte d'Ivoire	7 Jun 2007		Madagascar	25 Sep 2007	
Croatia	30 Mar 2007	15 Aug 2007	Mali	15 May 2007	7 Apr 2008
Cyprus	30 Mar 2007		Malta	30 Mar 2007	
Czech Republic	30 Mar 2007		Mauritius	25 Sep 2007	

Participant	Signature	Ratification, or accession	Participant	Signature	Ratification or accession
Mexico	30 Mar 2007	17 Dec 2007	Seychelles	30 Mar 2007	
Mongolia		13 May 2009[a]	Sierra Leone	30 Mar 2007	
Montenegro	27 Sep 2007		Slovakia	26 Sep 2007	
Morocco		8 Apr 2009[a]	Slovenia	30 Mar 2007	24 Apr 2008
Namibia	25 Apr 2007	4 Dec 2007	South Africa	30 Mar 2007	30 Nov 2007
Nepal	3 Jan 2008		Spain	30 Mar 2007	3 Dec 2007
Nicaragua	21 Oct 2008		Sudan		24 Apr 2009[a]
Niger	2 Aug 2007	24 Jan 2008	Swaziland	25 Sep 2007	
Nigeria	30 Mar 2007		Sweden	30 Mar 2007	15 Dec 2008
Panama	30 Mar 2007	7 Aug 2007	Syrian Arab Republic		10 Jul 2009[a]
Paraguay	30 Mar 2007	3 Sep 2008	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	29 Jul 2009	
Peru	30 Mar 2007	30 Jan 2008	Togo	23 Sep 2008	
Portugal	30 Mar 2007		Tunisia	30 Mar 2007	2 Apr 2008
Qatar	9 Jul 2007		Uganda	30 Mar 2007	25 Sep 2008
Romania	25 Sep 2008		Ukraine	24 Sep 2008	
Rwanda		15 Dec 2008[a]	United Arab Emirates	12 Feb 2008	
San Marino	30 Mar 2007	22 Feb 2008	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	26 Feb 2009	
Saudi Arabia		24 Jun 2008[a]	United Republic of Tanzania	29 Sep 2008	
Senegal	25 Apr 2007		Yemen	11 Apr 2007	26 Mar 2009
Serbia	17 Dec 2007		Zambia	29 Sep 2008	

[a] Accession